

Vicksburg National Military Park

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Vicksburg National Military Park



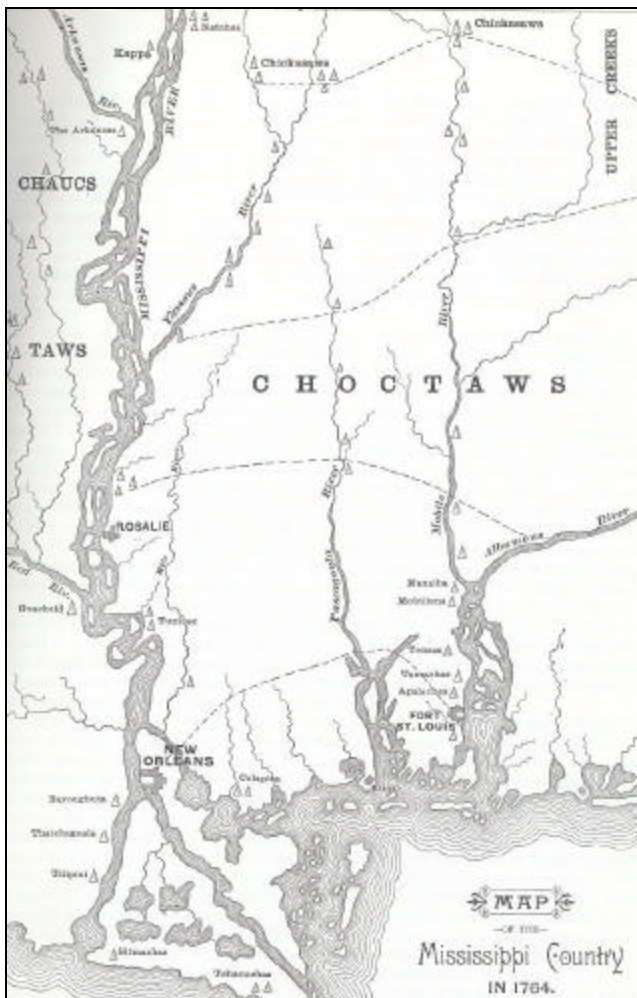
Vicksburg Trivia



Who Was Here First? Early History of the Vicksburg Area

Indian tribes in the Vicksburg vicinity included the *Yazoo* and *Tensas* in the northern part of the county, and the *Grigra* in the southern part. *Choctaw* was the language spoken by the *Grigra*, and they were kin to the *Natchez*. In the 1830's, Vicksburg was an encampment for the Indians during the forced march, *Trail of Tears*, to Oklahoma. The encampment was located on *Harrison Street*, near *McRaven*.

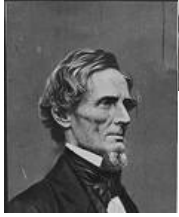
During the Revolutionary War, this area was part of British West Florida, a colony that did not rebel against England. The few settlers in what is now known as Warren County were Tories. It was taken over by the Spanish during the war; later an American expedition, led by James Willing came downriver on a flatboat, pillaging and burning the area.



British and French dominions in North America, 1763.

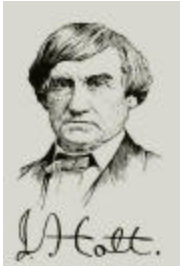
Indian Tribes in Mississippi

Who Was That? Famous Folks in Vicksburg



Brierfield Plantation

Jefferson Davis



Joseph Holt

Josiah Gilbert Holland



Seargent Smith Prentiss

Jane Long



Alexander McClung

Jefferson Davis - President of the Confederate States of America, Davis lived at **Brierfield Plantation**, 20 miles south of Vicksburg. The first political talk he ever gave was on the lawn of what is now the Old Court House Museum. Brierfield burned in 1931.

Joseph Holt - An attorney, Holt later served in Buchanan's cabinet and was Advocate General under Abraham Lincoln.

Josiah Gilbert Holland - Editor of Scribner's Magazine, Holland was the first superintendent of public schools in Vicksburg during the 1840's. Holland authored over 11,000 articles and numerous books.

Seargent Smith Prentiss - Originally from Maine, Prentiss moved to Mississippi when he was 19, where he became a Vicksburg attorney and Whig congressman. He is still considered the greatest orator in the history of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Jane and James Long - In 1819 they lived approximately where the bridges now cross the Mississippi River in Vicksburg. He was a doctor, serving under Andrew Jackson in the Battle of New Orleans in 1814; she was a niece of General James Wilkinson. In 1819 the couple raised an army and moved to Texas, where Long hoped to establish a republic with himself as president. He was assassinated and his army deserted. Jane stayed on Galveston Island until Stephen Austin arrived. She lived to be 84 years old and is known in Lone Star history as "The Mother of Texas."

Walker Brooke



Alexander McClung - Nephew of Chief Justice John Marshall, he was one of the most famous duelers in the country, known to have killed over 30 people in duels. McClung still holds the distance record for the longest shot fired in a duel. In the end, however, he finally took his own life.

Walker Brooke - A United States Senator in the 1850's, and later a Confederate congressman, he choked to death on a large oyster while dining in Vicksburg with a Yankee occupation officer from Maine.

Theodore Roosevelt - As President, he made two speeches in Vicksburg, one in **1902**, the other in **1907**. He had come to go bear hunting in the **Louisiana** and **Mississippi Deltas**, and when he refused to shoot a restrained bear cub in **Issaquena County** in **1902**, toy manufacturers began calling their stuffed bear toys, **Teddy Bears**.

Other important visitors to Vicksburg include:

- ❖ Author **Washington Irving** during the **1850's**;
- ❖ Vice Presidents **John C. Calhoun**, **Richard Johnson**, and **John C. Breckinridge**;
- ❖ Presidents **Zachary Taylor**, **Millard Fillmore**, **Ulysses S. Grant**, **William McKinley**, and **William Howard Taft**;
- ❖ **Grand Duke Alexis** of Russia;
- ❖ **Emperor Dom Pedro II** of Brazil;
- ❖ **Henry Clay**;
- ❖ Author **Oscar Wilde**;
- ❖ **President Eamon de Valera** of the Irish Republic.

Theodore Roosevelt



John C. Calhoun



William McKinley



William Howard Taft



Grand Duke Alexis



Emperor Dom Pedro II



Oscar Wilde



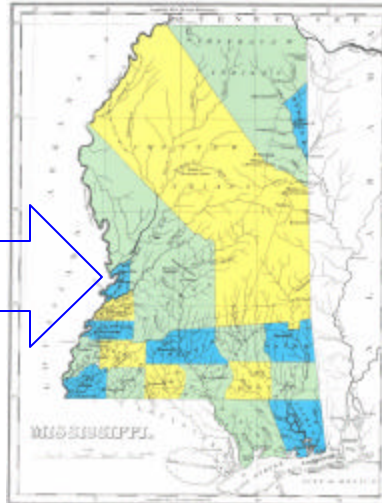
Eamon de Valera

When Was That? Important Dates in Vicksburg

The earliest settlement, *Fort St. Pierre*, located about 10 miles north of Vicksburg, near Redwood, was established in **1698**, a year before Biloxi. It was a French mission, and in **1720** was bigger than New Orleans, with a population of approximately 400. The settlement then began to decline, and in **1729** the Indians massacred the garrison and the fort was abandoned.

The group demanded the gamblers leave the city, and in response, Dr. Bodley was killed by the miscreants. The irate citizens caught and hanged several gamblers, then bound and gagged the others, setting them adrift in the river. A monument to Dr. Bodley stands on *Openwood Street*.

Mississippi, ca. 1822



Bodley Memorial

The *siege* of Vicksburg began on **May 18, 1863**, and the city surrendered to Union forces on **July 4, 1863**.

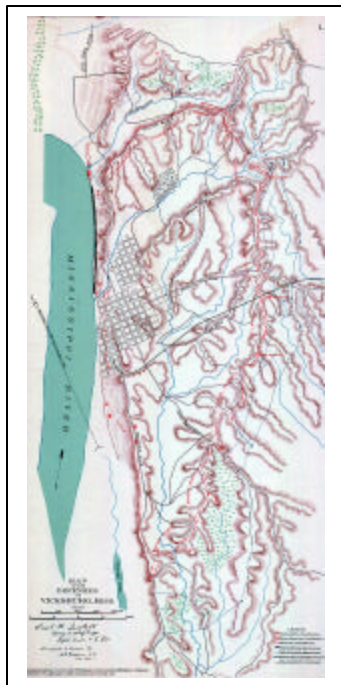
In **1876**, the *Mississippi River* changed its course, shifting west several miles and leaving Vicksburg without a river front. In **1902**, the *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* diverted the *Yazoo River* into the old river bed, forming the *Yazoo Diversion Canal*.

Vicksburg National Military Park was created by Congress on **February 21, 1899**, the fifth National Military Park established in the country. Ownership of the Park was transferred from *The War Department* to the *Department of Interior* on **August 10, 1933**. It is the eighth oldest National Park in the United States.

July 4th was *officially* observed in **1947** (for the first time since the Civil War), when *General Dwight D. Eisenhower* came to Vicksburg.



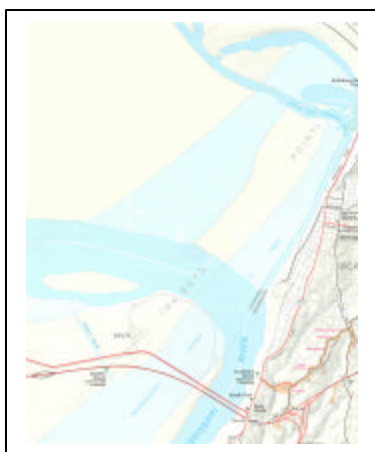
General Dwight D.
Eisenhower



Siege of Vicksburg

Warren County was organized in **1809**, the first court being held in a log house in the south end of the county until a court house was built at *Warrenton*, the county seat. The town was a bustling settlement just west of the present-day airport. Warrenton remained the county seat until the *mid-1830's*, when Vicksburg was given the title. Floods later devastated Warrenton and the town no longer exists. *Mississippi* was admitted to the Union on **December 10, 1817**; *Vicksburg* was founded in **1819** and incorporated in **1825**. The city stands on land originally owned by *Reverend Newitt Vick*, a Methodist minister, who died in **1819**.

A typical river town, Vicksburg was infested by a crime element, and in the **1835**, when gamblers crashed a July 4th picnic and insulted some ladies, a citizens' group was organized, led by *Dr. Hugh Bodley*, the Presbyterian minister.



Mississippi River - 1863 (light blue)
Mississippi River - present (dark blue)



Vicksburg National Military Park

How Old Are They? Homes and Churches in Vicksburg



McRaven



Lakemont



Duff Green Mansion

Balfour House



Plain Gables



The Galleries



Although a portion of **McRaven** may date to the late **1700's** (**ca 1797, 1836, 1849**), the oldest house in Old Vicksburg Proper is **Lane House** (**ca 1824**), owned by **Rev. John Lane**, son-in-law of Rev. Newitt Vick.

Other old homes in Vicksburg include:

- ❖ **Lakemont** (**Lake House**; **ca 1830**)
- ❖ **Plain Gables** (**Bodley House**; **ca 1834**)
- ❖ **Duff Green Mansion** (**ca 1856**)



Anchuca



Cedar Grove

Pemberton Headquarters



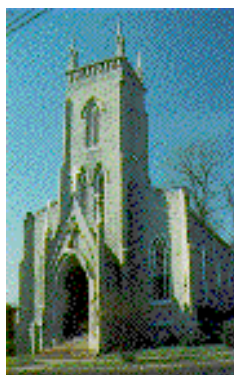
Lane House



Martha Vick House



- ❖ **Anchuca** (**ca 1830**)
- ❖ **The Galleries** (**ca 1830-1869**)
- ❖ **Cedar Grove** (**ca 1840-1858**)
- ❖ **Martha Vick House** (**ca 1830**)
- ❖ **Balfour House** (**ca 1835**)
- ❖ **Pemberton Headquarters** (**ca 1835**)



Christ Episcopal
Church

Christ Episcopal Church was organized in **1839**, and the building completed in the **1840's**, the cornerstone placed by **Bishop-General Leonidas Polk**. It is the oldest structure used for worship in Vicksburg, withstanding war and other catastrophes, and was used for services by both Union and Confederate forces during the Civil War.

Methodists came to Warren County around **1800**, and in **1805** established **Hopewell Church** (only the cemetery remains), and in **1812**, **Redbone Church**.

Baptists established their first church in **1819**, and called it **Antioch**. The building is now demolished, however the cemetery still exists.

Catholic, Jewish, and Presbyterian worshippers established congregations in the **1830's** and **1840's**.



Redbone Church

Antioch Church



Hopewell Church
Cemetery Monument

